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REMARKS

Claims 1-20 remain in the application.

Claims 11 and 18 are amended to place the claims in condition for allowance as stated below.

Claims 12 and 19 are amended to more distinctly claim the invention.

Allowable Subject Matter:

The Office Action states that claim 11 was objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. By this amendment, claim 11 is amended to include the limitations of prior claim 1 and intervening claim 10. It is believed that this amendment now places claim 11 in condition for allowance by incorporating the limitations of claims 1 and 10 as stated in the Office Action.

The Office Action states that claim 18 was rejected but would be allowable if rewritten in overcome the 35 USC 112 rejection and to placed in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. By this amendment, claim 18 is amended to overcome the 35 USC 112 rejection and to include the limitations of claim 12. It is believed that amendment now places claim 18 in condition for allowance as stated in the Office Action.

Drawing Rejection:

The drawings were objected to because the drawings did not show every feature of the inventions specified in the claims and particularly a slot in the first receiving reel. Applicants respectfully submit that such slot is shown by default at the point where tape 15 is inserted into reel 80. Because of the positioning of reel 80 and tape 15, it is not feasible to show the individual slot within reel 80. Accordingly, applicants

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respectfully submit that this objection to the drawings should be withdrawn.

35 USC 112 Rejections:

Claims 1 - 20 were rejected under 35 USC 112 as being indefinite.

In claim 1, the phrase "rotating the first receiving reel a first rate" was rejected because the term "a first rate" was vague and indefinite. Applicants respectfully submit that the term is merely a noun that distinctly sets out the rate at which the first receiving reel is rotated. Consequently, the term "a first rate" is not vague or indefinite. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that this rejection of claim 1 should be withdrawn.

Claim 12 was rejected because the word suitable was indefinite. It is believed that the amendment to claim 12 now overcomes this rejection.

Claim 19 was rejected because the terms suitable and sufficient were indefinite. It is believed that the amendment to claim 19 now overcomes this rejection.

Claims 12-18 were rejected because the term "forming" was indefinite. The Office Action indicated that it was not clear how the claimed device was formed. Applicants submit that one skilled in the art has the required skills to know how to form an element that has the characteristics called for by each element of claims 12-18. The claims are not required to provide the technical explanation of how these elements are to be formed, but to set out the boundaries of the steps that are applicants' invention. A technical explanation is provided in the specification that teaches one skilled in the art to form at least one embodiment of these elements without undue experimentation. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that this rejection of claims 12-18 should be withdrawn.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1-20 now comply with 35 USC 112.

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35 USC 102 Rejection:

Claims 1, 3-10, 12-15, 17, and 19-20 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) over Lesage (U.S. Patent No. 4,351,687). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants claim 1 includes, among other features, mounting a plurality of receiving reels onto a shaft, positioning a first receiving reel of the plurality of receiving reels, inserting the first end of the first carrier tape into the first receiving reel then releasing the first end, and removing the first receiving reel from the shaft while moving a second receiving reel of the plurality of receiving reels to the position to receive a second carrier tape.

At least these elements of claim 1 are not disclosed by the relied on reference.

The Office Action states on page 4 that the coils of metal (element 30) of Lesage are receiving reels. It is believed that the relied on reference does not support this assertion. The relied on reference clearly states in column 3, line 2, that element 30 is a coil of material that has wrapped around shaft 10. The relied on reference does not disclose the use of a receiving reel.

Consequently, the relied on reference does not disclose the step of mounting the plurality of receiving reels onto the shaft, nor does it disclose the steps of positioning the first receiving reel at a position on the shaft to receive the first carrier tape, nor does it disclose the step of inserting the first end of the carrier tape into the first receiving reel then releasing the first end, nor the step of stopping rotation of the first receiving reel, nor the step of removing the first receiving reel while moving a second receiving reel to receive a second carrier tape. In fact, the relied on reference discloses in column 4, lines 38-58 that all of coils 30 are formed simultaneously, thus, the first reel can not be removed while moving the second reel

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into position. Additionally, the relied on reference is silent on inserting a first end of the tape into the receiving reel then releasing the first end. It would be appreciated if the portion of the relied on reference that discloses these elements would be distinctly pointed out. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the relied on reference is deficient in anticipating claim 1.

Claims 3-10 depend from claim 1 and are believed to be allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

Additionally, claim 3 calls for, among other things, wherein receiving the first carrier tape from the tape and reel handler into the receiving opening of the automated reel changer and responsively grasping the first end of the first carrier tape includes detecting the first end and responsively grasping the first end. The Office Action states on page 5 relative to applicants' claim 3 that the relied on reference discloses "responsively grasping a first end with a detecting device (58) (when winding at the beginning, 65a will initiate grasping of the first leading end to the mandrel 10)." Applicants respectfully submit that this statement is not supported by the relied on reference. The Lesage clearly teaches in column 4, lines 38-58 that "at the end of the coiling operation, the operator controls the operation jack 34 so that roller 29 comes into turning contact with coils 30 ... side by side on shaft 10" ... "when a strip tail 13a reaches a corresponding coil 30, is possibly drawn by attraction means 65 to trigger detector 58 ...". Thus, detecting device 58 does not grasp the first that is inserted into the receiving reel as is required by claim 3, but device 58 and 65 detect the trailing edge that is rolled onto coil 30. Accordingly, is respectfully submitted that the relied on references deficient in anticipating claim 3.

Further, claim 7 calls for moving the securing device into contact with the first carrier tape, and re-activating rotation

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of the first receiving reel. This sequence of "re-activating rotation" is not disclosed by the relied on reference. It would be appreciated if the examiner could point to the text of the relied on reference that discloses this operation sequence. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claim 7 cannot be anticipated by the Lesage reference.

Amended claim 12 calls for, among other things, forming a loader module to receive a first carrier tape and responsively insert a first end of the first carrier tape into a first receiving reel of the plurality of receiving reels;

forming a reel positioner to eject the first receiving reel from the rotationally driven reel shaft and position a second receiving reel of the plurality of receiving reels to receive another carrier tape from the loader module.

The relied on reference does not teach theses operations. As stated hereinbefore, the relied on reference is silent on a receiving reel and on inserting a first end of the carrier tape into the first receiving reel. The relied on reference is also silent on the reel positioner formed to eject the first receiving reel while positioning a second receiving reel to receive another carrier tape. The deficiency of the reference relative to theses elements was explained in the traversal of the rejection of claim 1. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claim 12 is not anticipated by the relied on reference.

Claims 13-17 depend from claim 12 and are believed to be allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 12.

Amended claim 19 includes, among other limitations, a reel positioner slidably attached to the rotationally driven reel shaft between the end of the rotationally driven reel shaft and the arc.

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At least this element is not disclosed by the relied on reference. The reference is silent on a reel positioner that is slidingly attached.

Claim 20 depends from claim 19 and is believed to be allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 19.

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CONCLUSION

Applicant(s) have made an earnest attempt to place this case in condition for allowance. In view of all of the above, it is believed that the claims are allowable, and that the case is now in condition for allowance, which action is earnestly solicited.

By this amendment, two independent claims were added for a total of five independent claims and twenty total claims. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees that may be required or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account 50-1086.

If there are matters which can be discussed by telephone to further the prosecution of this Application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney/agent at the Examiner's convenience.

Respectfully submitted,  
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